

Wanted Dead or Alive

by hillstar

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****Prompt: Wanted Dead or Alive by Bon Jovi**
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><p>From the time he was a small child, Harry Potter felt as though something was hunting him.**<p>**

Whenever Aunt Petunia or Uncle Dursley spoke of how Harry's parents had died in a car accident, their story seemed incomplete. Harry sensed in the tingling of his scar that the force that had taken his parents remained at least partially alive, waiting to take him too.

Harry sometimes turned around as if he was being watched by some endlessly patient yet malevolent monster and not just surveyed disapprovingly by his aunt and uncle or harassed by Dudley and Dudley's friends.

On his eleventh birthday, Harry learned that the name of this hunter was Lord Voldemort.

From that time on, the pursuit accelerated. Someone was always after him, whether it was the Dark Lord during Harry's first year, as the hooded figure gorging itself on unicorn blood, or the Dark Lord's echo, Tom Riddle, during Harry's second year. Teachers followed him, from Snape who caught him lurking in the halls to Mad-eye Moody who turned out to be Barty Crouch Jr., manipulating his role in the Triwizard Tournament. Even Professor Lupin attacked Harry when the

moon was full.

Death eaters wanted him as their prize, their enemy, and their sacrificial victim. Reporters, governors, and the Order wanted him as their champion, their hero, and their star. Sometimes Harry felt as though there was little difference between being Undesirable Number One and being the Chosen One.

The dementors scared Harry the most because they wanted not just a piece of his story, the performance of some action, or the termination of his life, but his very soul. His soul was one part of himself that, through all the battles and near-escapes, had always belonged to himself alone.

Sometimes, at the lowest moments in their friendship, Ron accused Harry of wanting the attention. Harry wondered if Ron had any idea how exhausting it was to be the object of so much worship or hate. Harry would insist that all he wanted to be was an ordinary boy who no one paid too much attention to at all.

That was, until the sixth year, when Ginny Weasley stopped pursuing him. Then, Harry couldn't help wondering every time she was talking to someone else on the train, making out with Dean Thomas, or ignoring him in the halls, if she had forgotten the feelings that had compelled her to write that ridiculous poem in their second year. He tossed and turned at night, wondering: Did she still want him or was the wanting all one-sided?

She was the one who ran towards him after the Quidditch match and threw her arms around him, but he was the one who kissed her first. In the minute, the hour, or the several sunlight days they kissed, Harry decided.

If she wanted his heart, she could have it.

End
file.